

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 6-9, and 11-22 are pending. Claims 1-4, 7, 11, 13, and 18 have been amended. Claims 6, 9, 12, 14-17, and 19 are original. Claim 8 has been previously presented. Claims 20-22 are new. Claims 5 and 10 have been canceled. No new matter has been introduced by the amendment.

1. Claim Objection

Claim 11 has been objected to because of informalities. Claim 11 has been amended to depend from amended independent claim 1. Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully submits that the objection to claim 11 has been overcome and should be withdrawn.

2. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) And under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1, 2, 4, 8, 12-16, 18, and 19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Bartman et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 4,891,053). Claims 1-4, 11-15, 18, and 19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Demeritt et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,274,502). Claim 17 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Bartman. Claim 3 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Bartman and in further view of Angenent et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 4,895,585). Claims 6, 7, and 9 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Bartman and in further view of Nied et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,290,333). The Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections based on the following remarks.

A. Independent Claim 1 And Its Dependent Claims 2-4, 6-9, and 11-19

The Examiner asserts that the space between the two cylindrical rings in Bartman defines an annular or concentric void/cavity (Office Action, pages 2-3). Bartman, however, explicitly teaches that the “excess quantity of glass pressed away through the annular gap 9 forms a collar 25 on the lens element” (see Fig. 6, and column 5, lines 66-68). In other words, the volume of the extra amount of glass is larger than the spatial volume of the space between the two cylindrical rings, the asserted void part in Bartman. Moreover, Bartman discloses that the alleged cylindrical holder (the annular gap 9) is in parallel with the inner circumferential surface of the holder 1 (see Figs. 5 and 6).

The Examiner also asserts that Demeritt teaches that the holder material may be provided with a void part (Office Action, page 6). Demeritt, however, explicitly shows that the glass lens preform 20 fills the entire space of the asserted void part (see Fig. 4).

In contrast, the method for making a holder/optical-element assembly as recited in amended independent claim 1 comprises the steps of positioning a cylindrical holder material in a press-molding die, the cylindrical holder material having an outer circumferential surface and an inner circumferential surface, wherein the inner circumferential surface has a void part, press-molding the cylindrical holder material and the optical-element material to form a cylindrical holder and an optical element, respectively, thereby fixing the optical element to the inner circumferential surface, allowing a projected portion of the optical element formed by pressure created during press-molding to extend radially outward from an outer edge, the projected portion being contained by the void part and between the inner circumferential surface and the outer circumferential surface, wherein an extra amount of the optical-element material is added, in advance, to the volume required

for forming the optical element, and the spatial volume of the void part is larger than the volume of the extra amount of the optical-element material, and wherein the cylindrical holder is formed in an integrated form, and the void part of the cylindrical holder is formed so as to extend out in a radial direction of the cylindrical holder from the inner circumferential surface of the cylindrical holder. Support for amended independent claim 1 can be found in the Applicant's specification, for example, in paragraph 0029, lines 8-10; paragraph 0048, lines 10-12; and in Figs. 1, 3A, and 3B.

In view of the above amendment and remarks, the Applicant respectfully submits that neither Bartman nor Demeritt teaches all the claim limitations as recited in amended independent claim 1. Accordingly, the rejection against amended independent claim 1, and thus the rejections against claims 2-4, 6-9, and 11-19, which all depend from amended independent claim 1, have been overcome and should be withdrawn.

B. Claims 13, 14, and 18

Regarding the rejections against claims 13, 14, and 18, the Applicant further respectfully traverses the rejections based on the following remarks.

Neither Bartman nor Demeritt teaches that the flow resistance of the asserted void part be adjusted in a particular manner.

In contrast, in the method for making a holder/optical-element assembly as recited in claim 13, the volume of the void part and the flow resistance of the holder material are adjusted to accommodate the extra amount of optical-element material in the void part. In the method for making a holder/optical-element assembly as recited in claim 14, the flow resistance of the holder material varies in proportion to the width of the one or more concentric cavities. The method as recited in claim 18 comprises

adjusting the flow resistance of the void part and a mold pressure during press-molding to accommodate the projected portion.

In view of the above remarks, the Applicant respectfully submits that neither Bartman nor Demeritt teaches all the claim limitations as recited in claims 13, 14, and 18. Accordingly, the rejections against claims 13, 14, and 18 are improper and should be withdrawn.

3. New Claims 20-22

Neither Bartman nor Demeritt teaches or suggests that the molding step and the asserted void part are adjusted such that in the absence of any extra glass molding material, substantially no material flows into the asserted void part. Moreover, as discussed in section 2A, the alleged cylindrical holder (the annular gap 9) in Bartman is in parallel with the inner circumferential surface of the holder 1.

In contrast, the method for making a holder/optical-element assembly as recited in new independent claim 20 comprises the steps of positioning a cylindrical holder material in a press-molding die, the cylindrical holder material having an outer circumferential surface and an inner circumferential surface, wherein the inner circumferential surface has a void part, and press-molding the cylindrical holder material and the optical-element material to form a cylindrical holder and an optical element, respectively, thereby fixing the optical element to the inner circumferential surface, allowing a projected portion of the optical element formed by pressure created during press-molding to extend radially outward from an outer edge, the projected portion being contained by the void part and between the inner circumferential surface and the outer circumferential surface, wherein the press-molding step and the void part are adjusted such that when an extra amount of the

optical-element material is added, in advance, to the volume required for forming the optical element, the extra amount flows into the void part of the cylindrical holder to form the projected portion of the optical element, but in the absence of such extra amount, substantially no optical-element material flows into the void part of the cylindrical holder. Support for new claims 20-22 can be found in Applicant's specification, for example, in paragraphs 0030, lines 9-12; paragraph 0047, lines 1-5; paragraph 0061, lines 1-4; and in Figs. 1, 3A, and 3B.

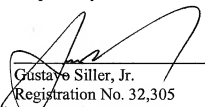
Moreover, neither Angenent nor Nied cures these deficiencies of Bartman and Demerritt. Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully submits that new independent claim 20 should be patentable. New claims 21 and 22 depend from patentable claims 1 and 20, respectively, and thus should be patentable as well.

4. Conclusion

Based on the above amendments and remarks, the Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance. The examiner is kindly invited to contact the undersigned attorney to expedite allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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Gustave Siller, Jr.
Registration No. 32,305
Attorney for Applicant

BRINKS HOFER GILSON & LIONE
P.O. BOX 10395
CHICAGO, IL 60610
(312) 321-4200